

## Community Outreach Action Log

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) is embarking on a modernization effort that will transform the way clients interact with FSSA. This modernization will provide clients with more choices and convenience while improving accountability for FSSA. The IBM-led Coalition is hosting informational meetings around the state for community organizations and service providers to learn:

- ✓ How service will be improved for Hoosiers applying for or receiving public assistance
- ✓ When changes will be coming to your local area
- ✓ How community organizations and service providers can stay informed and become involved

The following list of questions and responses will be updated and posted on the FSSA website so that community organizations and service providers can continue to learn about how this initiative will improve services for Hoosiers. More information is also available by e-mailing the IBM-led Coalition at [vcan@us.ibm.com](mailto:vcan@us.ibm.com).

**1. How will the IBM-led Coalition ensure the new solution is user-friendly for individuals who have challenges with their eyesight, hearing or manual dexterity?**

The application used as part of the modernized solution will be compliant with accessibility requirements in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Accessibility will continue to be a main focus during design and testing. All call centers will be enabled for TTY, a device commonly used to assist people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired in using the telephone to communicate.

**2. How will the IBM-led Coalition ensure the new solution is user-friendly for individuals with little or no experience working with computers or Internet applications?**

The IBM-led Coalition views ease of use as a priority in the development of the new system. The application, including the online and phone components, will be designed for use by clients without extensive computer or web experience. Prior to the Region One pilot, focus groups representing special needs populations will review and provide feedback on the online application. Clients will also continue to have access to live, personal assistance through the call centers.

**3. How will ICES notices be handled in the new solution? Will caseworkers be notified and able to see notices when they are sent?**

ICES notices, including the type and date, will be available in the automated system. Notices will be maintained, including the electronic image, within the system and will be available for review as part of the electronic case file. The new system eliminates the need for clients to work with a single, dedicated caseworker, so the electronic case file will be accessible to any caseworker who assists any client.

**4. How will individuals interact with the call centers as part of the new solution? Will the system be easy to use?**

Call centers will provide an easy to use interface for clients and caseworkers. Clients will call a toll free number, provide some basic information and be connected to the Intake Agent or specialist who is best positioned to assist them. In addition, call centers will offer an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system that will be available in English and Spanish 24 hours a day. Clients can use the keypad on their phones to indicate the type of question or service they are calling about, and the IVR will provide updates on their applications or information such as Frequently Asked Questions.

**5. In cases where recipients are flagged as potential fraud candidates, will recipients be notified before benefits are reduced or eliminated?**

Based on FSSA's current policy, clients are notified of discrepancies identified via established data sources and given an opportunity to explain and resolve the discrepancy. Benefits are not reduced or terminated without a notice being sent to the client at least 10 days prior to the action occurring.

**6. Will all calls be recorded at the call centers? Will call center employees provide identification numbers or their names at the beginning of each call?**

While the state has not required 100% of calls to be monitored or recorded, the IBM-led Coalition recognizes the importance of customer service and accountability for every client interaction. Call center calls will be recorded for training and quality assurance purposes, and call center personnel will identify themselves by name each time they speak with a client.

**7. What type of training programs will be in place for staff working in the local offices and the service centers? Will training be improved as part of the Modernization?**

The IBM-led Coalition will assume responsibility for all staff training, including state staff, as part of the Eligibility Modernization. This will include updates and improvements to the state new hire training materials as well as new training tools and technologies that have not been available at the state in the past. Customer service training will be standardized throughout the service centers and local offices, with an emphasis on active listening and treating individuals with respect.

**8. Will there be caseworkers specialized in certain programs, such as Medicaid waivers? How will clients access those with expertise in different programs?**

Yes, the IBM-led Coalition will have staff who specialize in specific program or policy areas, including Adult Medicaid cases and waiver clients. The IBM-led Coalition is currently identifying other areas that might warrant specialized staffing, knowledge, or resources. Clients and caseworkers will have access to these specialists through the service centers.

**9. What type of review will be done in cases where an application for assistance is denied? Who will be doing quality assurance?**

In every case, the eligibility determination is made by a state employee, just as it is today. The IBM-led Coalition staff will be gathering information and required verifications and referring the case to a state employee for review and a final eligibility decision. In addition, both the IBM-led Coalition and the state will be pulling a sample of cases, including both approved and denied cases, for quality review.

**10. Will applicants with special needs have access to a dedicated caseworker?**

The goals of Modernization include increased access for clients as well as improved efficiency for the state. In the modernized solution, clients will have access to a larger pool of caseworkers without being limited to just one specific person that can help them with their application. Some individuals with special needs, such as mental or physical challenges, currently have an authorized representative (an individual, friend or family member knowledgeable about their situation) who interacts with caseworkers on their behalf. Authorized representatives, with appropriate client consent, will continue to have the ability to act on behalf of these individuals to initiate an application.

**11. What are the different services offered at the two different types of service centers?**

The six minor service centers will handle case documentation, including application processing, re-determination processing, change reporting, benefit recovery and hearing preparation. In addition, state staff at the minor service centers will make eligibility decisions.

The two major service centers will provide all of the services offered by the minor service centers, including having state staff who make eligibility decisions. The major service centers will also administer the telephone application screening and general inquiry, provide document center processing (transferring paper forms into electronic files) and data center processing.

**12. How will contact information for community service providers be maintained and updated?**

The IBM-led Coalition will work with referral organizations, such as Indiana 211, to provide information to clients who need immediate assistance, such as access to housing or a food pantry. In addition, the IBM-led Coalition will maintain a list of the community organizations which have agreed to participate in the V-CAN as providers of referrals or as access points. In cases where V-CAN organizations are willing to publicize their access points, contact information will be available through an online list.

**13. What languages will be supported as part of the eligibility determination process?**

Spanish speaking operators will be available at the call centers during normal operating hours, and the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system will be available in English and Spanish 24 hours a day. In addition, the same third-party translator service in use by the state today will be available in the new system for other languages.

**14. Will policy determinations become more consistent or more documented as part of Modernization?**

The state retains all responsibility for policy creation and policy interpretation. The IBM-led Coalition will incorporate policy training and believes that with centralized service centers, the consistency of applying approved policies will improve.

**15. How will services be provided for individuals who begin the eligibility determination process in a physical location where the new system has been implemented, and then move to a physical location where the new system has not yet been implemented (or vice versa)?**

The Coalition is currently working on this short term issue and will have a solution prior to the beginning of the pilot in the first region in September. Based on the anticipated regional roll-out, this will only be an issue for a short number of months.

**16. How will clients confirm documents are received and eligibility determination processes are moving forward? Will the IVR system or online interface provide updates?**

The new system will provide an easy to use interface for clients to access information and updates related to their applications. Intake Agents at the call centers will be able to confirm receipt of documents that have been faxed or mailed by the client, and the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system will be available in English and Spanish 24 hours a day for automated updates on application status (approved, denied or pending).

**17. What percentage of the client population is expected to use the Internet for applications?**

The IBM-led Coalition projected that initially less than 25% of clients would use the Internet application to file applications, though other states such as Florida have seen much higher utilization of their online systems. Within Indiana, the intent is to grow the percentage of clients using the new online tools as features and functionality are added to the application and as people become more comfortable with the Internet system. However, clients will continue to have access to caseworkers at the service centers for live, personal assistance.

**18. What happens to clients who do not have access to alternative access channels for applications?**

The modernized solution does not remove access channels, so clients will continue to have the ability to go to a local county office for assistance if that is the best option for them. Clients who have phone or Internet access can use these additional channels and tools for increased convenience.

**19. What different types of roles will community organizations play within the V-CAN? Will there be financial reimbursement available?**

Initially, there will be four defined V-CAN roles, as summarized below. No financial reimbursement will be provided to V-CAN organizations in any of the four roles.

**Supporter:** Provide resources or support to other local V-CAN organizations that might not be able to participate on their own.

**Informational:** Receive communications updates, including bi-monthly online newsletters, and invitations to local meetings as they are scheduled.

**Referral:** Post and distribute client-focused outreach materials such as posters and postcards, as they are made available by the IBM-led Coalition. Refer their clients to appropriate local resources for public assistance information.

**Access Points:** Offer applicants access to information and application materials via the Internet, a phone or a fax machine. These organizations are not intended to provide direct eligibility services, only to offer access to the eligibility mechanisms through one of the available channels.

**20. Will the locations of available access points be published and available to community organizations and potential clients?**

Initially, there will be four defined V-CAN roles, ranging from information distribution and referral all the way to full access points. Each community organization will select their own participation level based on their mission and resources. Organizations that choose to participate as access points will have the option of sharing their contact information with the general public through an online list of V-CAN participants.

**21. How will the IBM-led Coalition promote ongoing communication with community organizations?**

Community organizations and advocacy groups will have several mechanisms for submitting questions and providing feedback. In addition to the initial informational meetings being held in February and March, regional community meetings will be held in the months leading up to each region's scheduled transition into the new system. The IBM-led Coalition will also provide regular informational updates to each organization that agrees to participate in the V-CAN, including a bi-monthly online newsletter. Community organizations are also encouraged to contact the IBM-led Coalition by using the [VCAN@us.ibm.com](mailto:VCAN@us.ibm.com) e-mail address.